

Remonstrance of the American Officers,

From the LONDON GAZETTE of last SATURDAY, DECEMBER the 2d, 1780.

Rhymified by THOMAS BRICE.

WE captains of the Yankee line
Think it our duty to combine,
And seriously address the States,
To let 'em know our dismal fates;
For twice have we applied in vain
From Congress pity to obtain,
Whose usage is so cursed hard,
That if we did not much regard
Our country's groans, the de'el us take,
If we'd a third petition make;
But straightway take a method shorter
To fill our paunches in free quarter.
To speak the truth, sirs, you must know,
When first we came to make a show
Of fighting these damn'd English lobsters,
It never once came in our nobs, sirs,
That they could have the curs'd assurance
To kill or clap us into duranee,
But, frighten'd at our martial farces,
On our approach have turn'd their a---s.
We thought t' have made a warlike show
Just for a summer's day or so,
And then decamp'd to tell the ladies
How perilous the soldier's trade is;
For had we dreamt so tough a bout,
We'd hang'd ere you'd have caught us out,
Since nor our strength nor inclination
Agree with war of long duration.
Yet somehow it has come about,
Our perseverance has held out,
And fill'd the land with admiration,
To see such scare-crows keep their station;
While heav'n rung with folks' applause
Of harmless soldiers' idle jaws,
Until (poor souls!) our families
Provok'd us by their piercing cries
To dare on Congress' peace intrude,
And charge 'em with ingratitude
In letting starve the babes and spouses
Of those who nimbly left their houses,
And skipp'd to camp like sheep to slaughter,
To save their rebel necks from halter.

But what adds most to our vexation
Is their damn'd fly recrimination;
For when we cried, 'The army's cheated,'
The rascals strait our words repeated,
And said each honest general
Had stole their pay, and chous'd 'em all;
When 'tis well known to all who heard it,
(And here we beg they'd give a verdict)
The strongest rhetoric was exerted,
Or we'd the payless camp deserted.

And then because we took a pride
(Praise-worthy, it can't be denied)
To shew we were of higher style
Than the riff-raff rank and file,

And let 'em know by whips and pla'sters
Their officers were plac'd as masters,
The stupid multitude must grumble,
And strive to make us live more humble,
By stinting us to half-fill'd platters,
And let our cloathing run to tatters.

Since well we know the Congress' purse
Is drain'd to emptiness, and worse,
We should not take it in such dudgeon,
But that e'en this they give with grudging,
And when we offer to complain,
They bid us shut our mouths again,
And thank our stars we've smaller sorrow
Than those from whom the Congress borrow.
Small comfort to our loins so taper,
T' have pockets hold uncurrent paper;
Though we might to fit use apply't,
Could we but eat to make us sh---.

And then what makes our mis'ry double
Is that we see no end of trouble.
Though we've so long in trenches hidden,
And dare not peep for fear of bleeding,
But rather than endure a battle,
Let Clinton's red-coats steal our cattle,
Who fatten faster than churchwardens
By plund'ring all our farms and gardens;
We do not find that fellow tires,
But still to trap us all conspires;
While in the south that plague Cornwallis
Scouts Gates, and scrags his spies at gallows;
And Ternay's fleet keeps close to dry land
And Rechambeau's forts at Rhode-Island,
Who gen'rous Lewy's brave armada
Would fain be marchi'ng to Canada,
But that Arbuthnot (devil shake him!)
If succours come will surely take 'em.
So that with all fly Franklin's arts,
Nor France nor Spain can take our parts,
Which leaves no hope the scene will brighten
Unless our ragmalls singly fright 'em;
But sure that ne'er can come about,
For ne'er was seen such rabble-rout
Of raggamuffins got together
To die by hunger and cold weather,
With officers who find a treat
In mouldy crusts and juiceless meat;
Whence grow such grumblings in our giz-
That sure ye need not to be wizards [zards,
To judge from wrinkles in our faces
How much we long to change our cases.

And therefore, countrymen, we warn ye,
To pay, and feed, and clothe your army;
For if we find not fit exertion,
By Jove, we'll make a quick desertion
To join Sir Harry or Cornwallis,
And leave the Congress to the gallows.